[Vol. 1.] THE [No. 8.]

WEEKLY VISITANT.

"OURS ARE THE PLANS OF FAIR DELIGHTFUL PEACE,
"UNWARP'D BY PARTY RAGE, TO LIVE LIKE BROTHERS."

SALEM—SATURDAY EVENING, FEBRUARY 22, 1806.

ORIGINAL PAPERS.

FOR THE WEEKLY VISITANT.

ON ASTROLOGY, &c.

But what, alas! is it to us,
Whether i' th' Moon men thus or thus
Do eat their porridge, cut their corns,
Or whether they have tails or horns? &c.
Hudibras—Part 2, *Canto* 3.

A wish to pry into futurity dwells in every breast. Had we a foresight of future events, it is thought we should be much happier, as we should not then be groping in the dark. But this is an idle opinion, as could we foresee every thing that will happen, we should be perpetually brooding over inevitable calamities. A knowledge of future events does not imply a power of changing the order of nature, nor of avoiding the calamities which are foreseen. It is more, therefore for the good and happiness of mankind to be ignorant of future evils, as an inevitable calamity dwelling on the mind, would deprive it of all happiness. Every countenance would be like that of a man under sentence of death.

This wish has given success to innumerable deceptions and impositions on mankind. Astrologers, magicians, and fortune-tellers have been found in all nations. At least, such were believed to exist, and they have always been successful in imposing on the weak, ignorant, and superstitious. Dealing with the devil, and selling of souls to eternal perdition, for a power of injuring inoffensive people, was supposed to be quite common.

None ever wished to have it believed that they dealt with the devil. Natural Magic and Astrology were openly professed, as they were not prohibited by law till within a short period, in any country. The professors of these *sciences* had only to put on a strange dress, wear a long beard, and learn the events in the lives of the principal people in the village where they established themselves, and then pretend they received this knowledge from the stars, and they found it an easy matter to gull the people. Very frequently they would find out from those who applied to them for assistance, their occupation and the business they came about, in such a manner as to

deceive them into a belief that the knowledge was acquired from their science.*

It was not among the ignorant and weak merely, that a belief in the influence of the stars on the fates of men existed. The greatest philosophers were influenced by it. Lord Bacon, who has rendered such services to the sciences, it is said, was not free from this weakness; and indeed, I believe, the mind is more influenced by the examples of the age, than by the dictates of philosophy. At least, it will be found among philosophers, that they have generally partook of the prevailing superstitions.

Between Astrology and Witchcraft, a radical difference is found. The latter is a power derived from a contract with the arch enemy of mankind, the devil, by which, as an equivalent for certain services, he has the soul, to roast and fry, and for him and his imps to use as a foot-ball, while the yells of the sufferers serve him for music. Astrology is founded on a belief, that every man is born under a good or evil star, and is nothing more than to find out which of the two it is, as in such case, they can judge whether he will be successful or otherwise in life. It is no wonder, therefore, that the witches should be detested, as the powers gained from the devil must be applied to injure mankind, and Astrologers should be respected, as they had only a knowledge acquired from study, and without a destruction of their good intentions.

The belief in the contracts with the devil, appears to me to be more rational than that in the influence of the stars; as allowing the devil to be roaming abroad through the earth, and having power to tempt men to evil, I see no reason why he should not have the power to make contracts with them; but what influence the stars should have over the actions of men, I cannot conceive.

But, however, the evils produced by this belief are incalculable. When any one, especially a female, had the misfortune to become old and friendless, her neighbors immediately cried out upon her as a witch. If any misfortune happened to any one, it was imputed to her machinations, and the poor person generally expiated the crime of old age, either on the gallows or in the flames. Malignity took hold of the prevailing superstition, and revenge glutted itself. Any one who had the misfortune to offend another was liable to

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*Butler describes the manner of doing this, in Part 2, Canto 3, of Hudibras—where the Knight and Ralpho going to consult Sidrophel, the latter, as he saw them riding up to his house, sent out Whackum to sound them, and as they were alighting he had the following consultation with the squire:

"He gave him first the time of day,
And welcom'd him as he might say:
He ask'd him whence he came, and whither
Their bus'ness lay? Quoth Ralpho hither.
Did you not lose? Quoth Ralpho, nay.
Quoth Whackum, I meant your way!
Your Knight—Quoth Ralpho is a lover
And pains intolerable doth suffer,
For lover's hearts are not their own hearts, [downwards.
Nor lights, nor lungs, and so forth
What time? Quoth Ralpho, sir, too long,
Three years it off and on hath hung.
Quoth he, I meant what time o' day tis,
Quoth Ralpho, between seven and eight 'tis.
Why then, Quoth Whackum, my small art
Tells me the dame has a hard heart,
Or great estate.—Quoth Ralph, a jointure" &c.

Whackum found means to impart his knowledge to Sidrophel, who surprised the knight by informing him of the business he came upon.

his revenge. Nothing more was necessary than to impute the crime of witchcraft to the offender, and he was arraigned, tried, and generally put to death; as prejudices were so strong against an accused party in these cases, that suspicion was sufficient evidence against them.

These superstitions have now generally faded away, and are only found among a few weak people. Knowledge is so diffused, that their folly is perceived by all classes of society; and this is sufficient to stop all abuses.

BARCA.

THE NOVELIST.

THE ZEGRIS.

AN INTERESTING SPANISH NOVEL.

[*Concluded.*]

Saydan, in the mean time, was so far happy in the delicate and generous friendship of Don Lewis and his sisters, that he would scarce have thought himself a captive, but for his absence from his adored Azida. They had frequent conversations: in these was conspicuous that generous flow of soul, in which each of them forgot the distinction of master and of captive.

'How is it possible,' said Don Lewis, one day, to the African, 'that a warrior like thee, could be brought to associate with pirates, with the enemies of mankind?'—'My Lord,' answered Saydan, 'the appellation of mankind is not confined to the Christians. Besides you must be sensible, that there exists between the Mahometans of Africa and the Christians a perpetual war, which short and ill-observed truces scarcely interrupt. The weak is vanquished by the strong, detained in slavery, and never restored to liberty but for a pecuniary consideration. So far we are upon equal terms.'—'What a detestable practice, replied Don Lewis, 'thus to make slaves by violence, and to sell men like abject beasts!'—'I allow,' said the African, that our custom of making slaves may be sometimes violent and cruel, but is never base. Your generosity to me my lord, has every claim also to the truth; and I will appeal to yourself whether I do not state it justly. Never, then, did a vessel leave our ports, to carry vile merchandize to the western coasts of Africa, there to purchase men, and women, and children, that we never knew, that never did us wrong! Never did our vessels transport those unhappy beings to distant climes, to exist there without repose, without consolation, without hope; to die there in perpetual bondage, or under the scourge of ruthless executioners. Never did we procure gold, the produce of the sweat, of the blood of those deplorable victims of unfeeling avarice. What can be more reproachable than this! To do the greatest possible injury to innocent men; to reduce them to this state of wretchedness, without allowing them the means of self-defence, without running any hazard in attacking them! And to exercise this infamous practice from the basest and most contemptible motives! And yet we, who detest this conduct, we are the enemies of mankind! What strange philosophy is this! Ye enlightened, ye humane Europeans, ye are the friends of the human race, and—ye have bowels of iron! For my part, my lord, I shall adhere to the noble philosophy of the sage Mehemet Taffer president of the great college of Fez, in which I was educated. He taught me, that a nation may be glorious in arms, splendid in riches, and illustrious for arts and talents, and yet, if inattentive to the cultivation of universal reason and justice, it shines not with real glory, and is still sunk in ignorance and barbarity. My Lord, shall we judge of the Europeans by the rule of Mehemet Taffer?

Such was the frankness with which the noble African addressed his conqueror. In other conversations, the expulsion of the Moors from Granada, and the perfidious and cruel treatment was mentioned by Saydan and deplored by Don Lewis. 'But we have been punished,' said he, 'for that false and

inhuman policy.—That sensible decay under which our monarchy now languishes, began precisely at the period when your ancestors were expelled.'

The Moor who had been dispatched by Abdallah, to effect the ransom of the noble Saydan, arrived at the castle of Don Lewis. He was astonished to find the corsair in a captivity of a kind unknown at Tetuan. He presented to him letters from Abdallah and Azida.—With what ecstacy did this ardent lover behold the well known characters of his adorable mistress! It was some time before he could open it, and read its inestimable contents:

AZIDA TO SAYDAN.

'Ah! Saydan! Saydan where art thou? If the black angel have—I shudder at the idea. But if thou art still living, if the characters traced by the hand of thy faithful Azida should reach thee, receive the gold and jewels which the trusty Marcon will deliver. Give the whole for thy ransom, and leave that detested country. Return instantly with Marcon. My brother is going to send to Montesa, to inform Hamet-Muley Zegri of our misfortunes. Return instantly, if thou lovest thy AZIDA.'

Saydan hastened to obey his beauteous mistress. He repaired to Don Lewis, who, actuated by the extraordinary esteem which he entertained for his captive, had determined to take no money for his ransom. The profession of a merchant too was beneath the dignity of a noble Spaniard; and it was more consonant to his exalted sentiments to require the liberty of a certain number of Christians in proportion to the rank of Saydan. He was thinking of this proposal, when Saydan came to present the letters, with money for his ransom. But how great was the anxiety of the African, on observing a sudden emotion in the countenance of Don Lewis! 'Who art thou' demanded he, 'What is thy name?'—'My name,' answered the slave, 'is too illustrious to be concealed. It is Saydan Zegri.'—'What! said Don Lewis, art thou a Zegri? Can this be true?'—'I am of a family,' replied Saydan 'unaccustomed to falsehood, that contemtible vice of vulgar souls: I am a Zegri.'—'I have been informed, however,' returned Don Lewis, 'that Hamet Zegri left no posterity, or that it was extinct at Morocco.'—'I am not surprised,' resumed Saydan, 'that you know the name of Hamet. He was a great man. If his sovereign had known his worth, Ferdinand and his soldiers would have perished before the walls of Granada. After the loss of that city, Hamet was determined neither to be, nor to seem to be a Christian. He took refuge in Morocco. His posterity resided there for more than a century, down to my great-grand-father Ibrahim Zegri, who, to shelter himself from the storms of a court agitated by excessive despotism, retired to Montesa, in the province of Tremecen, where we have great estates; and where Hamet Muley Zegri and I were born.'—Don Lewis offered his hand to Saydan: 'I am descended,' said he, from Ysouf Ferez, brother of Hamet Zegri; come and embrace a Zegri.'—'Art thou a Zegri, my lord?' exclaimed Saydan: 'I believe it, I believe it. Thy conduct to me has been worthy of that name.'—Don Lewis sent for his sisters. 'This is a Zegri,' said he, presenting Saydan to them: 'He is of our family.'—The sisters received this news with equal pleasure and suprise; and the scence that ensued resembled the discovery and restoration of a friend long lost to his family.

This will not appear surprising to those who consider how much the Spanish nobility pride themselves upon illustrious ancestry; that a kind of sanctity is impressed upon the name of an ancient house, which entitles all that bear it to every possible respect; and that the blood of the Moorish conquerers of Spain still flows (as in this particular instance) in the veins of some of the noblest families of that country.

The situation of things was greatly changed by this unexpected discovery. It gave to Saydan the knowledge of the Spanish branch of his illustrious family: It restored, without any stipulation, his liberty, and the certainty of seeing Azida; but to this happy event it necessarily prolonged the time. Don Lewis neither could nor would send Saydan back without rich presents, and in a situation, and with an equipage, worthy of the name of Zegri.

The happy time at length arrived. Yet Saydan, impatient as he was to behold his beloved Azida, could not leave these excellent Zegris without regret. It is not possible to describe a parting scene, all the characters in which

had displayed that generosity of sentiment which dignfies the human mind. The son of Don Lewis accompanied Saydan to Algesiras. He gave him a rich diamond ring. 'Take this,' said he, for the beautiful Azida. Presented by Saydan, as the gift of a Zegri, she cannot refuse it.' The two Zegris parted, and the African vessel was not long in sight.

Three months afterward, a Spaniard, whom Saydan had redeemed, arrived at the castle of Don Lewis. He informed him, that the vessel which had brought him to Carthagena, was laden, on his account with a considerable freight; and he delivered to him this letter.

'THE SLAVE SAYDAN TO HIS GENEROUS MASTER.'

'You and yours, my lord, are incessantly in the heart of Saydan; he claims your congratulations; he is husband of Azida. My dear master, be assured of the friendship of my brother Hamet. He has received your present. Receive ours. Besides others, which you will distribute among our illustrious relations, there are two Arabian horses, with their genealogy. We imagine that one of them will be for you, and the other for the young and noble Zegri, Don Michael. Azida wears his ring: she sends him a scarf embroidered by herself. Kings themselves might not disdain to wear an ornament that has been wrought by the fair hands of Azida. We are setting out for the province of Tremecen. Mazour will direct the correspondence which you have promised to maintain with us. The only regret the husband of Azida can feel is, that you are not here, or that we are not with you. Why has fortune, in cruel sport, divided the branches of a cedar once so lofty! May the God of nations protect the Zegris of Spain, and those of Africa; and when your eyes are turned towards our shores, say 'Saydan is there and he loves us. Adieu.'

ROBIN AND SUSAN.

The following tender and delicate little story is from Anderson's Recreations in Agriculture, &c. under the head of "Travelling Memorandums."

At a village not a hundred miles from Shrewsbury, I overheard the following coversation. "I would give my heart," said a well looking young man to a beautiful girl who sat beside him—"I would give my heart, Susan, for one kindly kiss of those bewitching lips of thine, were it not that I have no heart to give? it has been gone from me a long while." "And pray" said Susan, with an arch expressive look, "where hath that roving heart of thine so long concealed itself?"—"You little enchanting rogue," said he, with an emphatic look which met her consenting eye, "and you pretend not to know where it has been!" Then clasping her in his arms, he imprinted upon her lips a warm ecstatic kiss expresive of the softest rapture. After she had a little recovered herself, with a sweeter blush suffusing her cheek than ever Aurora yet displayed—"Well, Robin," said she, "I also would give my heart to have back that kiss again, were it in my power to give: but alas, it is gone and I fear will never more be within my power." "And when did this little wanderer take flight?" said he; "and where hath it taken up its abode since it left thee?" "It made its escape," said she, "the moment that I knew I had got possession of your's; for no sooner did I feel it warm within my breast, than it filled it so entirely that I could find no place for any thing else; so off it flew directly, and here it took refuge (putting her hand upon his breast;) feel how the little flutterer frisks about in its new abode." "It is a kind little heart, Robin," said she, (concealing her face upon his bosom) "and will prove ever true to you."—"Blessings upon thee, my lovely Susan," said he (pressing her tenderly in his arms, and gently leaning his cheek upon her's, the rapturous tears flowing copiously down) for now you have made me the happiest of mankind." Blessings upon you both, said I, retiring; and blessings upon thee, Mr. Editor, and blessings on all mankind. My heart is full; for is there any pleasure we feel equal to that of participating in the bliss which is the reward of innocence and virtue?

TIMOTHY HAIKBRAIN.

POETRY.

FOR THE VISITANT.

FABLE III.

THE TONGS AND PHILOSOPHER.

A *sage Philosopher* one eve,
Wrapt in contemplation's clouds,
(Then fancy's fairies to their hall,
Troop'd in gay fantastic crowds,)

Sat beside his chimney fire,
(At the time the cricket sings)
Building castles in the air;
Scorning sublunary things.

On a sudden, down the tongs
And the rattling shovel fell,
Which awoke him from his dream,
Kicking Patience to the De'l.

Up he jump'd in furious fret,
Cursing shovel and the tongs,
Swore that nothing else could fret,
Like falling tongs and scolding tongues.

I s'pose you think the tongs will speak;
No—nature shan't be so abus'd,
For, at sage Philo's harsher din,
They in expressive silence mus'd.

ÆSOP.

[Scarcely a week passes in which we do not see an account of the arrival in South-Carolina, of a *cargo of slaves!* Every well wisher to this country and to human nature, must deprecate such a trade. Every philanthropist must wish to see these unfortunate beings freed from the shackles of such a detestable slavery. How long this inhuman traffic will be permitted, God only knows. A bill has lately been introduced into Congress, for laying a tax on slaves; how far this may check the importation, we are not able to determine. Black as Erebus must be the hearts of men, who can thus outrage every principle of *right*, banish from their breasts every feeling of philanthropy, stifle every compunction of conscience, and thus extirpate all sense of duty to God and to man. The following Song, first published in the Trenton True American, in 1802, while it interests the feelings, presents a melancholy picture of the abuses which these wretches are capable of inflicting on the poor sable sons of Africa.]

VISITANT.

THE AFRICAN SLAVE.

Tune, "Ellen O'Moore."

Ye Sons of Columbia, who taste every blessing
That Liberty, Plenty, and Peace can bestow,
Give ear to my story, and think how distressing!
Ah! hear the sad tale of an African's woe!
Though guiltless my life was, without provocation
I was torn from my country, companions, and nation,
And doom'd to the toils of a life's mancipation,
Ah! such the hard fate is of ITANIKO.

One morn, I my juvenile gambols was playing,
No ill did I bode, for no fear did I know,
As through the palm-forest thus carelessly straying,
A prey I was seiz'd by the steel-hearted foe;
Who dragg'd me on board, where in fetters they bound me,
While pale-visag'd hell hounds in horror surround me,
I plung'd in the deep, hoping death would have found me,
They snatch'd from the billows poor ITANIKO.

My father! I utter'd in wild exclamation,
When life's crimson current awhile ceas'd to flow—
Awake, O my Country! in just indignation,
The swift feather'd vengeance elance from the bow!
In vain were all efforts their power to vanquish,
What language can picture my heart-rending anguish!
In cold galling chains for my freedom to languish!
Oh! such the hard fate is of ITANIKO!

On board of our ship there arose a dire faction,
I let my curst fiends the conspiracy know;
But mark the reward of this life-saving action,
Although I befriend them, no pity they show;
For, when on the shores of Columbia we landed,
The caitiffs I say'd, with what infamy branded!
The Christian's base gold was the boon they demanded,
And sold as a slave was poor ITANIKO!

You boast of your Freedom—your mild Constitution,
See tears undissembled for Liberty flow!
Unmov'd can you witness such cruel delusion,
Who feel in your bosoms philanthropy glow?
Were we not by the same COMMON PARENT created?
Why then for the hue of my race am I hated?
Why, faultless, to misery and chains am I fated?
Ah! why is thus wretched poor ITANIKO?

Each morn, to fresh toils I awake broken-hearted,
The blood-streaming lash, and the sweat-reaking hoe;
By Country, by Hope, by all Pleasure deserted,
A victim, alas! to unspeakable woe:
O God of Columbia! behold with compassion,
The cruelsies, insults, and wrongs of my nation;
And blast from thy justice that tyrant-oppression,
That holds from his country poor ITANIKO!

THE SWEDISH COTTAGE.

FROM CARR'S NORTHERN SUMMER.

Here, far from all the pomp ambition seeks,
Much sought, but only whilst untasted prais'd,
Content and Innocence, with rosy cheeks,
Enjoy the simple shed their hands have rais'd.

On a gay rock it stands, whose fretted base
The distant cataract's murm'ring waters lave;
Whilst, o'er its grassy roof, with varying grace,
The slender branches of the white birch wave.

Behind, the forest fir is heard to sigh,
On which the pensive ear delights to dwell;
And, as the gazing stranger passes by,
The grazing goat looks up and rings his bell.

Oh! in my native land, ere life's decline,
May such a spot, so wild, so sweet, be mine!

ANECDOTES.

Lord St. John being some time ago in want of a servant, an Irishman offered his service; but being asked what countryman he was? he answered, an Englishman. Where was you born? said his Lordship. In Ireland, an' please your lordship, was the answer. How then can you be an Englishman? My lord, replied the man, supposing I was born in a stable, that is no reason I should be a horse.

A schoolmaster, a great foe so idleness, thinking that the well known expression, 'Idleness covereth a man with rags,' might be improved, wrote a copy for one of his scholars, 'Idleness *covereth* a man with *nakedness*.'

A LUCKY ACCIDENT.

A poor woman, who during the late epidemick, supported herself and family by selling hot coffee, at the New Market, had her coffee-kettle one morning overturned and all her coffee spilt by the carelessness of a sailor boy, who was passing by. While she was lamenting the loss, and its consequences to her poor family, who owed their sustenance altogeteer to the proceeds daily received from the sale of her coffee, the captain of the boy happened to come along. She called to him and requested some little compensation for the injury done by his boy, which the captain seemed rather to decline, not yet having understood the case in all its circumstances. A person standing at a small distance observed to the captain, that he thought he ought to pay the woman for her coffee, that she was poor, and upon it depended the support of herself and family. The captain viewing the stranger as a person interfering in affairs that did not concern him, asked, in a tone somewhat elevated, how much he would give towards the support of the poor woman? He answered, "As much as you will, Sir." "Here is ten dollars, then," says captain S.—"Here is as much," replied the stranger.—"Here is ten more," says the captain.—"Here is as much," answered the stranger. Captain S. then paid her one dollar in the first place for her coffee, which was a little more than her charge, and having thrown somethng into her lap, departed.

But guess at the poor woman's astonishment, to find *forty-one dollars* in her lap! At first she was rather doubtfull of the reality of what she saw, but with some considerable persuasion she put up the money, wiped away her tears, took up her kettle, and went home with a lighter step than she had ever trod before. *New-York Evening Post.*

Thursday the third day of April next, has been appointed for a day of public fasting and prayer in this Commonwealth.

MARRIAGES.

In this town, Mr. Asa Hart, to Miss Mary Pitman.

"In Virginia, Mr. Nathaniel Lee, aged 87, (after being three times married, and having 11 children, 49 grand-children, and 10 great-grand-children,) to the lovely Miss Elizabeth Tucker, aged 19." We think this must have been a *matter of money*, for in no other view can we conceive the probability of such a union; but

"*The precious metal*
"*Solders sexes, like a kettle.*"

DEATHS.

At Charlestown, Capt. Lemuel Cox, æt. 69, an eminent mechanic. In Boston, Daniel Sargent, esq. æt. 75. In Marblehead, Capt. Michael Coombs, æt. 73—Mrs. Mary White, æt. 35, consort of Dr. Joseph W. In Newbury, Mr. Richard Little, æt. 81. In Newburyport, Dr. John Newman, æt. 85.

In this town, Mrs. Mary Osborne, æt. 75, wife of Mr. Stephen O.—Mr. Joseph English, æt. 72.

DROWNED—Mr. Henrick Bodee. He was walking up Long Wharf, about 3 o'clock on Friday morning, with three other persons, when he accidentally walked off the side of the wharf; and it being very dark, it was found impossible to save him.

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